

from whence he is not. Preach the pure Word and let God take care of the increase. And last but not least, we need not only prayer but

III. Prayer meetings.

(1) As a means of power. I have spoken of prayer as a means of personal strength. But when the strength of each individual is put together it becomes a power. A single wire will not suspend a very large bridge; but wire after wire twisted together suspends our great bridges. A single blade of grass will not beautify a very large lawn, or a drop of water float a very large vessel. But note the power of combination. Blade after blade, each contributing its beauty, forms the beautiful carpet woven by nature's loom. Drop after drop is pumped into the earth's basins until the vast areas of water float our steamers from shore to shore carrying their cargoes of wealth. A single prayer, tho powerful within itself, when joined with others, becomes a power able to shake the earth from center to circumference. But why such combined efforts in the world and so little in the church? Why such energy and enthusiasm in the world and so little in the church? Why such lack of spiritual power when we might have so much? Why so many souls going down into perdition and so few into the church? One reason is that dollars and cents are valued above the souls of men and wisdom. And another is, the mass of the Christian profession is catering to the whims of the world instead of walking in the path laid out by our Lord and Savior. They are warming themselves at the devil's fires instead of the fire built by the Son of God. Rev. James McDermid puts this truth in a nut shell when he says, "Peter warmed himself at the fire of the enemies of his Redeemer. He was making himself comfortable with those who were making it very uncomfortable for his best friends. Sad example of what is taking place every day. And adding this expression, we not unfrequently see a son or a daughter persisting to warm themselves at the devil's fires at the cost of the tears of father and mother. Alas! in no few instances do we see this same father and mother close their earthly life with the tears of sorrow on their eyes over the disobedient child. But continuing he says, men and women professing to be followers of Jesus Christ are found at the card fire, and the bottle fire, and the dance fire, and the trashy novel fire, and the theater fire, and the bull fight fire, and many other fires kindled and cared for by the devil. They are denying their Master right along. Ah, yes, when they are warm toward the world, they are cold toward the Savior. The man that warms at the devil's fire will never fire much at the devil. You need never expect that man who is fond of his "wee drop" brandy to fight the agents of the devil in the liquor business. No, no, he is not going to help put out the fire at which he warms. The woman that feels a comfortable glow from the card table is not

worth killing when it comes to the matter of fighting gambling. People who go to see the "good plays" or who like to go to the theater "occasionally" will do nothing to put out the theater fire that destroys character and home and the souls of men.

We have far too many people, who like Peter are warming at the devil's fire, and it is very hard to get them to see that God's children can have a far better fire to warm by than any the prince of darkness can furnish. I like the fire that has the rose-of-sharon smell, and not the sulphuric. Brother, brother, try warming at the prayer fire, at the Bible study fire, and the sacred song fire; let the soul-reviving glow of Antioch and "Arlington," and "State Street," and "Olivet" come upon you. Spread out your hands and your heart before the blessed prayer meeting fire that has set aglow the hearts of so many of God's dear saints. Put yourself before the help-the-lost-man fire; its warmth will cause your soul to tingle with delight. The tenderest buds of your noblest yearnings will open in the genial warmth of that fire. Away, away with the enemy's fires, and all who hear the name of Christ warm before the love fire kindled on Calvary."

A church without spirituality is a public nuisance; and if it cannot be revived the quicker it is disorganized the better it is for the cause at large. "Why cumbereth it the ground." Its influence is against Christianity and a reproach on the name of Christ. The church is not like an ocean steamer, says Dr. O. P. Glifford, where a few can do the work of running the machinery, preparing the food, and taking care of the state-rooms, while most are passengers enjoying transportation. It is rather a Roman trireme, where each rower did his share of the work—a broken oar, an unshipped oar, a sleeping rower delayed the boat."

Five things at least are essential to a lively prayer meeting:

1. A regular attendance. If it should happen that only a few are present when you attend, do not stay away the next time and excuse yourself on the ground that there were only a few present and little interest. Right then and there your responsibility begins; and each time we fail to thus discharge our duties we bring condemnation upon ourselves. Again to excuse ourselves on the ground of being too busy is very seldom an acceptable excuse to the Lord. "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness then all these things shall be added unto you," says Jesus. But is it not the policy of many to reverse this language, and when heaven is mentioned they are as sure of it as the angels which are there.

It is the duty of each member to be present at each meeting so far as is possible. No man or woman can shift the work belonging to him or her. The work which you do is yours and not mine. If I am not there to discharge my duty it is left undone. And who is the loser? Myself and the church. If your neighbors call invite them to go

along or excuse yourself. Some people will call purposely to keep you away. Some one may say I can pray effectually at home. True. But how many of you who thus excuse yourselves, when the prayer meeting comes, sit down each week and study a chapter and offer a prayer in behalf of the church and yourself, or do you spend the evening in reading the evening papers or talking over the affairs of life? If you do read a chapter and offer a prayer, it wields no influence outside your family circle and in so far as it is made manifest in their lives. Who knows but what your prayer, your song, your testimony, would send conviction to some listener.

3. Avoid criticism. If a brother or a sister makes a mistake, take no recognition of it in public; if you do it may wound his feelings to such an extent that he may be reluctant to take part again, or perhaps stay away entirely. If anything is said let it be to him alone and then in a spirit of kindness.

4. Strive to benefit others as well as yourself. But above all strive to please God. Let your prayers be seasoned with salt. Endeavor to live what you pray and pray that you may live right.

5. Come in the spirit of prayer. Come from your closet with your heart full of God's love. Come in the strength of God so far as possible. In so doing you will promote the spirituality of yourself, your brethren, and the church. Besides this when you return home you will find it brighter, your rest will be sweeter, heaven surer, and God will be glorified.

Bryan, O.

WOMEN IN THE CHURCHES

J. L. GILLIN

"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." I Tim. 2:11, 12.

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." I Cor. 14:34, 35.

These passages open up the whole question of the proper method of interpreting Scripture. We all know that it is often easier to dodge a difficulty, or to offer a superficial interpretation than to arrive at and present the real explanation of a portion of Scripture.

Now, if Scripture is to be applied to modern life, it is evident that it cannot be applied intelligently unless we understand the particular conditions of the times and places far which it was written. In other words, to assume that the conditions of every church today are similar to the conditions which existed in the churches at Corinth, etc., to whom Paul wrote these letters, is to make an